



## Hygienic School for Colored Children stood on this site 1880-1958

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The first school (house) in Baldwin is documented in the year of 1873 which was part of Swatara Township. It is noted that in 1879 there was a Colored School in Baldwin, which the town later became known as Steelton. This entire upper area was known as Hygienic Hill.

During this decade the Colored School children's four room building was at the corner of East Conestoga Street and Trawitz Alley. As the student body became larger the need for more classroom space became evident which caused the Steelton School Board to make the decision to move the Colored school to this location in 1892. It became known as the Hygienic School for Colored Children.

The school's student body continued to grow causing again the need to add a second floor and then acquire more land in order to build an addition to the site here at Adams and Bailey Streets (currently Frank S. Brown Blvd.). During the upgrading of the school, student classes were held in the Monumental AME and First Baptist Churches, and the Odd Fellow Hall located on Adams Street.

The Steelton School system student body consisted of primary classes (grade 1-4), secondary classes (grades 5-8) and Intermediates (grades 9-12). But Hygienic student could not mainstream into the intermediate grades. They had to stay here until they completed the eight grades whereas the other schools in the Borough transferred their students in the seventh grade to the Junior-Senior High School.

Throughout their years in the school system, the students would learn the basic studies of reading, writing, arithmetic, science, history, English, geography, health, art, music and debating courses. Girls would be given special courses in sewing and cooking. The boys would get special courses in mechanical drawing and domestic science. They used the playgrounds for games such as bean bag, jump rope, ball tossing, running, skipping, swinging and various physical activities. The youth would also have the benefit of sports such as football and track.

The teachers were to strive to develop and foster an appreciation of knowledge with education, to ensure the student could learn in a healthy environment and instill the virtue of having a good future. The teachers instructed the students to "Do your best, and do it every day" and strive constantly to secure diligence. They were also to assign no school work as a punishment. Be cheerful and have a hopeful spirit express itself in countenance, voice and manner. The teacher would encourage the parent to visit the school often in all grades.

As the years of progression were developed in the Borough, the enactment of Brown v. Board of Education happened, which pushed along the need to move all the Elementary students to the Felton

Building. The Steelton High School then merged with the Borough of Highspire for the grades seven to twelve in 1958.

Hygienic produced: Teachers, lawyers, doctors, ministers, professors, Armed Forces members such as the Buffalo Soldiers and Tuskegee (Airman) Institute attendees and many ordinary people who served their community and country well.

The Hygienic School for Colored Children was eventually demolished in 1974 leaving only the childhood memories in the minds of many who once passed through its doors.

Major contributors:

Borough of Steelton

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Ryan Mohn Foundation

Ralph Buzzy Reed in memory of A. Beatrice Reed and Edward L. Carey Jr.

This monument could not be done without the help of committee members: Barbara Barksdale, Jessie Bowman, Elizabeth Jefferies, Cheryl Powell, Carol Graves and the Steelton Borough Council.

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Additional information can be found at <https://aaregistry.org/story/the-hygienic-school-opens/>